



# FROME RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE

### MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year 1936

Embodying the Report of the Sanitary Inspector

GENTLEMEN,—

I beg to submit my 19th ANNUAL REPORT on the Public Health and Sanitary Administration of the Frome Rural District for the year ending December 31st, 1936.

#### Vital Statistics.

##### BIRTHS.

The number of live births registered during the year was 121—65 boys and 56 girls.

This is the lowest yet recorded. The average for the last seven years is 139.

The Birth Rate per 1,000 population is 12.28. The rate for England and Wales is 14.8.

##### DEATHS.

The Infant Mortality, that is, the number of deaths under one year of age, is 4. This is very low indeed, and only half that of last year.

The rate per 1,000 registered live births is 33.

The rate for England and Wales is 59.

##### Deaths under one year analysed :—

Under one week	..	..	..	..	1
One to four weeks	..	..	..	..	1
One to six months	..	..	..	..	2
Six to twelve months	..	..	..	..	0
					—
					4
					—

The Causes of Death under one year of age were as follows :—

Premature Birth	..	..	..	..	1
Bronchitis	..	..	..	..	1
Inanition (Meningecele)	..	..	..	..	1
Death Under Ether	..	..	..	..	1
					—
					4
					—

##### THE GENERAL DEATH RATE.

The number of deaths registered during 1936 was 84—50 males and 34 females.

The number after correction for inward and outward transfers was 108—62 males and 46 females.

This gives a death rate, after correction for transfers, of 10.8—nearly the same as last year, which was the lowest for the previous six years.

The rate for England Wales is 12.1.

##### CAUSES OF DEATH.

Tables showing the causes of death (classified) and the ages at which death occurred will be found in the Appendix.

As was noted last year, the great majority of the deaths occurred in the last two age groups, viz., 23 at 45 to 65 years of age, and 72 at 65 years and upwards.

Among the causes of death Organic Disease of the Heart heads the list as usual with 25, against 19 last year.

Cancer shows a slight rise : 13, against 11 last year.

5 deaths under Influenza, and 20 from Respiratory Diseases were probably due to the exceptionally wet and unhealthy weather of the autumn and winter months.

#### Sanitary Circumstances in the Area.

##### WATER.

*Nunney.*—A report was presented to the Council in regard to the improvement of the supply to the Reservoir Tanks at Nunney Catch. The provision of water meters to the farms taking their supplies from the line of main to the Tanks was carried out ; and, as a proper check can now be kept on the quantities used, the draw off has been considerably reduced, and a constant and adequate flow is available to replenish the Reservoir Tanks.

*Buckland Dinham.*—This supply has proved adequate and no complaints were received during the year.

*Leigh-on-Mendip.*—No shortage of water was experienced on account of springs running low ; but a breakdown with the hydrant caused inconvenience at the high level at Tadhill. Alterations were made to the hydrostat in accordance with the advice of the makers, and since these were completed it has continued to work satisfactorily. Improvements were also effected to the pipe line supplying the low level tanks, on account of the defective construction of this pipe.

*Norton St. Philip, Rode and Beckington Regional Scheme.*—Considerable progress has been made with this scheme. A bore-hole has been sunk to a depth of 130 feet, and an adequate and pure supply of water obtained. Pumping tests give 100,000 gallons per day.

*Faulkland.*—The water supply to this village is unsatisfactory, and I trust that it may be possible to link up this district with the Regional Scheme when the same is completed.

*Coleford.*—This supply has been abundant for the needs of the district, and the abnormally wet year has resulted in there being an overflow from the springs throughout the year.

*Wanstrow.*—This supply has been adequate, and the wet year has maintained an abundant yield from the springs.

**Water Analyses.**—A number of water samples were taken from the village of Rode for the purposes of the Ministry of Health Enquiry into the proposed Regional Water Supply for this side of the District. Water samples have also been taken at various times from the new bore-hole at Norton.

**Rivers and Streams.**—No action was necessary in regard to pollution of these; and a constant watch is being kept to see that no such pollution takes place.

#### Ministry of Health Enquiry.

A public enquiry was made by the Ministry of Health into the proposed Regional Water Supply for Norton St. Philip, Rode, and Beckington, and a large amount of work was entailed in the preparation of evidence to be given at this enquiry. The result of the enquiry was the approval of the Scheme by the Ministry. During the year a complete survey was made by the County Sanitary Inspector, with the co-operation of your Sanitary Inspector, into the question of drainage disposal over the whole area, and a report prepared by him for the Somerset County Council.

#### Sewerage and Drainage.

**Norton St. Philip.**—Alterations and improvements were effected to the sewerage tank and outfall drain at Norton Hill, which has resulted in the avoidance of flooding of the land wherein the tank is situated.

**Buckland Dinham.**—The whole of the drainage of this village has been rearranged; the old stone drocks which served as sewers have been replaced by properly constructed sewers, and the highway and land water drains have been disconnected from the sewers and separately dealt with. The cleansing of sewer ditches throughout the district has received attention, and supervision. The cleansing of the sewage tanks at Nunney has been regularly carried out.

**Coleford.**—A public enquiry was held by the Ministry of Health into the application for a loan for the provision of new sewerage and sewage disposal works for the village of Coleford, and a large amount of work was entailed in the preparation of information required for it. These works have since been put in hand and are nearing completion.

#### Scavenging and Disposal of Refuse.

##### SCAVENGING.

**Coleford** is the only village where the collection of the whole of the house refuse is carried out under Sec. 12, Public Health Act 1875, and the work has been satisfactorily done. The bad practice of the residents at certain places in throwing their refuse in heaps on vacant pieces of land has been carefully watched, and the provision of receptacles for the reception of refuse has been insisted upon.

##### INDESTRUCTIBLE REFUSE.

Further additions of outlying portions of the area have been added to the districts from which the collection of indestructible house refuse is undertaken, *e.g.*, Kilmersdon Common and Farleigh Hungerford.

##### DUMPING PLACES.

The question of the disposal of the large amount of indestructible refuse now collected presents a difficult problem, particularly in the S.W. side of the district, where the tips which have been provided by the generosity of land-owners in the past are now practically full, and other tips will have to be found if the collection from this area is to be continued.

#### Sanitary Inspection of Area.

190 premises were inspected for sanitary defects during the year.

39 nuisances were discovered.

For the remedy of these the number of notices served was:—

(a) Statutory	..	..	..	..	0
(b) Informal	..	..	..	..	39

All these were abated by the end of the year.

#### Schools.

The sanitary condition and water supply of the Schools are satisfactory.

No nuisances were reported during the year.

**School Closing.**—The following schools were closed during the year on account of the prevalence of infectious disease:—

1. *Rode Methodist* (by County Authority) from 3/3/36 to 20/3/36 inclusive, for Measles.
2. *Great Elm* (by Local Authority) from 30/3/36 to 10/4/36 inclusive, for Chicken Pox.
3. *Kilmersdon Endowed* (by Local Authority) from 15/6/36 to 28/6/36 inclusive for Measles.
4. *Great Elm* (by Local Authority) from 12/12/36 to after Christmas Holidays for Whooping Cough.

#### Inspection and Supervision of Food.

##### Milk Supply:—

Number of Producers on the Register .. 390

Number of Distributors on the Register .. 80

divided as follows:—

- (a) Distributors only .. .. . nil  
(b) Distributors who are also producers .. 80

(A producer is only included as a distributor if he definitely makes a business of selling his milk by retail to individual customers.)

##### Number of Licences given to Grade Milk

###### Distributors:—

Pasteurised .. .. .	2
Grade "A" Producers .. .. .	29
Grade "A" Bottling .. .. .	1
T.T. Producers .. .. .	7

**I.T.T. Bottling.**—The operation of the Milk Marketing Board's Scheme in reference to the Milk Supply has entailed a large amount of work in connection with the improvements which are being carried out at farms to meet the standard of requirements laid down. The number of licences issued by the County Council is steadily increasing and the amount of time taken up in undertaking the sampling of milk from these farms for the County Council is very considerable.

**Examination of Milk for Tubercle Bacilli.**—21 samples, from the milk of 474 cows were taken for the County Medical Officer of Health. Of these only one sample was positive.

**Meat Supervision and Examination.**—Visits for this purpose have been frequently made to slaughter houses and other premises during the year.

2 whole carcasses of beef and 5 pigs were condemned and destroyed.

##### Slaughter Houses—

Number licensed	..	..	..	11
Number registered	..	..	..	0
Knaekers' yards	..	..	..	3

**Bakeries.**—The number remains the same. No nuisances were reported.

**National Rat Week.**—Action was continued on the same lines as last year, against the rat pest. Supplies of poison are issued to householders applying for the same.

#### Prevalence of, and Control Over, Infectious Disease.

With the exception of Scarlet Fever the number of cases of serious infectious disease in the district was negligible.

**Scarlet Fever.**—There were eighteen cases notified of which five were sent to Shepton Mallet Isolation Hospital, and the remaining thirteen treated and isolated at home. There were no deaths and no return cases.

**Diphtheria.**—Only two cases were notified, and were both sent to the Isolation Hospital. No deaths occurred. Antitoxin and Throat Swabs have been supplied to local medical practitioners when required.



*Puerperal Fever.*—One case occurred, was sent to hospital and died there.

*Ophthalmic Neonatorium.*—Two cases were notified. Both recovered without any impairment of sight.

*Influenza.*—Was prevalent towards the end of the year. There were five deaths from this cause as against only one last year.

*Pneumonia.*—All respiratory diseases were prevalent, no doubt due to the exceptionally wet summer and winter. Fourteen cases of pneumonia were notified with eight deaths.

*Tuberculosis.*—The number still remains remarkably low: only three cases of respiratory, and three of non-respiratory being notified. There were two deaths, both from respiratory tuberculosis.

No un-notified cases were discovered.

### Housing.

Tables and statistics under this heading will be found in the Appendix.

### Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

These have been inspected throughout the district during the year. No nuisances were discovered.

## APPENDIX

### Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres) .. .. .	51,718
Population (estimated resident mid-1936) ..	9,850
Number of Inhabited Houses (end of 1936) ..	2,827
Number of Families or Separate Occupiers ..	2,837
Rateable Value (at end of 1936) .. .. .	£36,991
Sum represented by a Penny Rate .. .. .	£154

*Social Conditions.*—Most of the area is engaged in farming and production of milk.

Apart from that Stone quarrying and crushing, and Coal Mining are carried on; the latter being confined to the neighbourhood of Coleford and Mells.

### Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

	<i>Total</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
Live Births: Legitimate .. .. .	121	65	56
Illegitimate, returns not received ..			

Birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population, 12.23.

Deaths .. .. .	108	62	46
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Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population, 10.8

Deaths from puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List):—

No. 29 Puerperal sepsis .. .. .	1
No. 30 Other puerperal causes .. .. .	0
Total .. .. .	1

Death rate of Infants under one year of age:—

Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births .. .. .	33
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Deaths from Cancer (all ages) .. .. .	13
„ „ Measles (all ages) .. .. .	0
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages) ..	0
„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) .. .. .	0

### The Ages at which Death Occurred.

Under one year .. .. .	4
1 year and under 2 years .. .. .	2
2 „ „ „ 5 „ .. .. .	1
5 „ „ „ 15 „ .. .. .	1
15 „ „ „ 25 „ .. .. .	1
25 „ „ „ 45 „ .. .. .	5
45 „ „ „ 65 „ .. .. .	23
65 „ „ upwards .. .. .	71
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### The Causes of Death were as follows:—

Scarlet Fever .. .. .	0
Whooping Cough .. .. .	0
Diphtheria .. .. .	0
Influenza .. .. .	5
Erysipilas .. .. .	0
Phthisis .. .. .	2
Other Tuberculous Diseases .. .. .	0
Cancer and Malignant Disease .. .. .	13
Meningitis .. .. .	2
Organic Heart Disease .. .. .	25
Bronchitis .. .. .	11
Pneumonia .. .. .	8
Other Diseases of Respiratory Organs ..	1
Diarrhoea and Enteritis .. .. .	0
Cirrhosis of Liver .. .. .	0
Nephritis and Bright's Disease .. .. .	7
Puerperal Fever .. .. .	1
Other Diseases and Accidents connected with Parturition .. .. .	0
Premature Birth .. .. .	1
Violent Deaths (other than suicide) .. ..	2
Suicide .. .. .	0
Other Defined Diseases .. .. .	15
Apoplexy and Cerebral Haemorrhage .. ..	8
Old Age .. .. .	7

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### General Provision for Health Services for the Area.

*Hospitals.*—One Cottage Hospital in Frome available for the Rural District. A scheme is under consideration for enlarging this.

One Isolation Hospital in Shepton Mallet available for this District.

*Ambulance Facilities.*—One Red Cross Ambulance kept in Frome available for the District.

*Public Health Officers of the Local Authority*—One Medical Officer of Health.

One whole-time Sanitary Inspector whose duties include also the management of the Water Works and Council Houses, Building Inspector, and Petroleum Inspector.

One Assistant Sanitary Inspector.

*Nursing.*—The area is well covered by the County District Nurses.

*Clinics and Treatment Centres.*—Are situated in Frome and available for the Rural District.

### Housing Statistics for the Year 1936

Number of New Houses erected during the year:—

(i) With State assistance:

(a) By the Local Authority .. .. .	0
(b) By Other Bodies or Persons .. .. .	0

(ii) Otherwise .. .. . 13 |

Total .. .. . 13 |

### Housing Inspections.

1. *Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the Year:—*

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) .. 151

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose .. .. . 320 |

(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 .. .. . 141 |

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose .. .. . 260 |

(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation .. .. . 17 |

- (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation .. .. . 124
2. *Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices* :—
- Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers .. .. . 33
3. *Action under Statutory Powers during the Year* :—
- (a) *Proceedings under Sections 17, 18 and 23 of the Housing Act, 1930* :
- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs .. .. . 0
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—
- (a) By Owners .. .. . 0
- (b) By Local Authority in default of owners .. .. . 0
- (b)—*Proceedings under Public Health Acts* :
- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied .. 6
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—
- (a) By Owners .. .. . 0
- (b) By Local Authority in default of owners .. .. . 0
- (c)—*Proceedings under Sections 19 and 21 of the Housing Act, 1930* :—
- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made .. .. . 5
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders .. .. . 0
4. *Housing Act, 1935—Overcrowding* :—
- (a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year .. .. . 13
- (ii) Number of families dwelling therein .. 13
- (iii) Number of persons dwelling therein .. 87
- (b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year .. .. . 40
- (c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year .. .. . 27
- (ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases (b) above .. .. . 226½
- (d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding .. .. . 0

Under the provisions of this Act a survey was carried out by the direction of the Clerk's Department during the year of all houses within a rateable value of £15 and a total of 2,145 were measured and recorded. The above table gives a summary of results as supplied by them.

#### Housing Act, 1930.

	1934	1935	1936
1. Demolition Orders Made (either as part of Clearance Area of under Sec. 19) ..	40	(16) 21	(0) 5 (0)
N.B.—Figures in brackets indicate numbers already demolished.			
2. Houses scheduled for demolition during 1936, but Demolition Orders not yet made .. ..			0

	1935	1936
3. Number of houses dealt with under Sec. 17 (i.e., unfit but repairable during 1935 and 1936—		
(a) Notices served and houses now made fit .. ..	39	7
(b) Notices served but not yet made fit .. ..	54	100
4. Houses constructed under 1930 Act to replace demolished houses ..	1934	4
Ditto .. ..	1935	30
Ditto .. ..	1936	0

#### Prevalence of, and Control Over, Infectious and Other Diseases.

##### NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING THE YEAR 1936

Disease.	Admitted		Deaths.
	Total Cases.	to Hospital.	
Small Pox .. ..	0	—	—
Scarlet Fever .. ..	18	5	0
Diphtheria .. ..	2	2	0
Enteric Fever .. ..	0	—	—
Puerperal Fever .. ..	1	1	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ..	2	0	0
Dysentery .. ..	2	0	0
Pneumonia .. ..	14	?	8
Erysipelas .. ..	3	0	0

#### Tuberculosis.

Age Periods.	New Cases.		Deaths.	
	Respiratory.	Non-Respiratory.	Respiratory.	Non-Respiratory.
	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.	M. F.
0— .. ..	—	—	—	—
1— .. ..	—	—	—	—
5— .. ..	—	1	—	—
15— .. ..	—	1 1	—	—
25— .. ..	1	—	1	—
35— .. ..	2	—	—	—
45— .. ..	—	—	1	—
55— .. ..	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards .. ..	—	—	—	—
Totals .. ..	1 2	1 2	0 2	0 0

#### Factories, Workshops and Workplaces

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

##### 1.—Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces :—

Premises	Inspections.	Number of Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
Factories (including Factory Laundries)	9	0	0
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	13	0	0
Workplaces (other than Outworkers' premises) .. ..	0	0	0
Total .. ..	22	0	0

##### 2.—Defects found in Factories, Workshops and Workplaces .. .. . nil.

Outwork in Unwholesome Premises, Section 108 nil.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

H. ROBINSON CODD, M.R.C.S., L.S.A.,

Medical Officer of Health to the Frome Rural District Council.

Nunney, Frome.

April 21, 1937.